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Groom who halted own wedding with bomb hoax sentenced to jail

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LONDON – A forgetful British bridegroom who made a hoax bomb threat rather than admit he'd neglected to book the venue for his wedding was sentenced Tuesday to a year in jail.

Neil McArdle called Liverpool's St. George's Hall from a phone booth on his scheduled wedding day in April, claiming a bomb was due to go off in 45 minutes.

His fiancée, Amy Williams, was left standing in the street in her wedding gown while the building was evacuated.

McArdle, 36, was arrested the same day and admitted that he made the call because he had forgotten to fill out the paperwork for the wedding.

"He did say several times how embarrassed and ashamed he was and how sorry he was," said prosecutor Derek Jones.

A judge at Liverpool Crown Court in northwest England sentenced McArdle to 12 months in jail.

Judge Norman Wright said that McArdle had frightened staff at the venue with his hoax—which came days after the Boston marathon bombings—and let down his fiancée.

"She was getting ready, expecting you were going to be man and wife and a very solemn public event in her life and you knew that was not going to take place," the judge said.

"You did not say 'We need to talk.' You tried to weasel your way out by creating a bomb hoax so the wedding would not take place."



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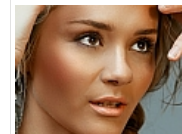
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Defense lawyer Charles Lander said McArdle and Williams are still together.

"The fact that she stands with him speaks volumes for her, and I hope volumes for him," Lander said.



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